

ference of this species. A visit to the Port Blair zoo (run by the Forest Department) was doubly interesting; besides seeing caged endemics like the Narcondam Hornbill and Nicobar Megapode we spent a good time watching *Phelsuma* antics in the zoo grounds.

Annandale (1904), wrote that "*P. andamanense* is probably the most interesting of the Andaman lizards. Its allies are found not in the Malayan islands or on the mainland of Asia, nor even on the mainland of Africa, MADRAS SNAKE PARK TRUST, MADRAS 600 022, February 14, 1978. .

but in Mauritius, the Seychelles, Reunion and Madagascar."

No further work has been done on *Phelsuma*; its call remains undescribed and we know next to nothing of its biology. Meanwhile it remains unlisted on the Wildlife Act Schedule (besides several other Andaman endemics) and deserves to be protected as a national monument as being a uniquely Indian species, found no where else in the world.

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Z. WHITAKER

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## 20. BREEDING OF TOKAY GECKO

(With a photograph)

In the two most recent definitive works on S. E. Asian herpetology, Smith's FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA Vol. 2 and Taylor's LIZARDS OF THAILAND there are only a few facts on the breeding biology of *Gecko gecko*. Smith has nothing and Taylor mentions the colour of the young and describes the eggs: "The biscuit-shaped eggs are plastered together and against a surface, usually in some dark place and left to hatch. Each female lays only two hard shelled eggs at a single laying."

Two pairs of this giant gecko were received at the Madras Snake Park from Calcutta during 1976. They are housed in a well ventilated, glass fronted display terrarium. Their average length is 25 cm.

On 6 July the keeper, M. Mani, discovered 2 eggs adhering to a small dry log kept in the terrarium. They were a few cms apart and measured about 6 cm in diameter. One of the eggs was accidentally knocked off. The remaining egg hatched on September 8th, an incubation period of 64 days.

The hatchling is 9 cms in length and brilliantly marked, dorsal reddish brown with white spots, underside greyish brown, with a black and white banded tail. It is a most lively young gecko, chirping and jumping, open mouthed if a finger is poked too close. Already it shows the adult tendency of biting and refusing to let go.